

Building Student Capacity to Reflect Alone and Together: Creating Effective and Thoughtful Class Dialogue

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Goals

To develop and integrate activities and assignments into faculty members' courses that will

- Develop the targeted critical thinking skills in students through reflective practices
- Develop strategies for engaging student group reflective dialogue
- identify alternatives for assessing student critical thinking skills through reflective practice



Workshop Outcomes



- Faculty will examine their assumptions about
 1. what reflection is,
 2. using reflection in the classroom, and
 3. thinking alone versus thinking together
- Faculty will examine how to enable community and develop student capacities to engage deeply
- Faculty will engage in reflective practice and dialogue
- Faculty will begin to evaluate reflective activities—for both reflection alone and reflection together--for furthering creative and critical thinking in their course



General Education Critical Thinking Outcome

- Demonstrate the ability to assemble information relevant to a significant, complex issue, evaluate the quality and utility of the information, and use the outcome of the analysis to reach a logical conclusion about the issue.

Jot down a few words for these four questions

1. What is your best academic working environment?
2. Compare: thinking alone with thinking together.
3. What is your working definition of student attitudes today?
4. A discussion in your class, what does this look like?

Turn to your two neighbors and compare answers



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- What did you learn?
Any different ways of answering the questions?

Psychological Influences

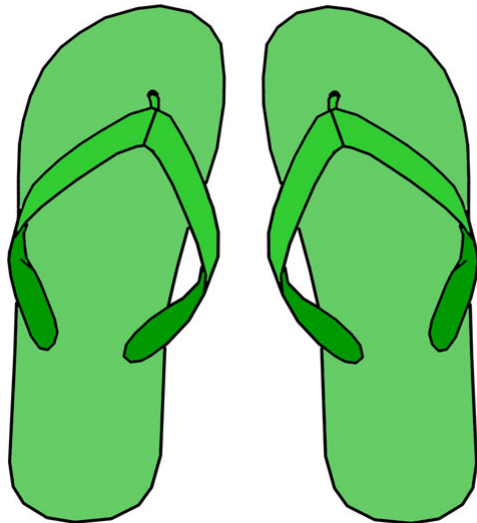
- “**Automatic preference**...predicts discriminatory behavior even among...[those] who earnestly (and, we believe, honestly) espouse egalitarian beliefs.”
Banaji & Greenwald, 2013, pp. 46-47
- **Implicit biases**
 - Self-serving bias: Success - something you did; Failure - external factors
 - Confirmation bias: Accept/trust information confirming your own preconceptions and opinions; dismiss info that conflicts with our views
- **Fundamental attribution error**: Under-emphasize situational factors when explaining others' behavior and over-emphasize dispositional factors



Reflection

- Write down your thoughts on what you just heard. 1 min.

Find a new table



Sandals groups

No Sandals groups

Nominate one scorer per group—quickly!

Answer these two questions in a group discussion (2 minutes each to discuss reasons)

- Why are people wearing sandals?
- Why are people not wearing sandals?

Psychological Influences

- **Ingroup/Outgroup biases**
 - Groups distinguished even by coin toss subject to biases (Tajfel, 1970, 1981)
 - Positive emotions (trust, admiration) – preferentially applied to Ingroup members (Brewer, 1999)
- **Strategies to combat bias**
 - Structure activities to ensure equal opportunity to contribute
 - Clearly define group roles (e.g. scribe, timekeeper, moderator)
 - 2-person pairs less vulnerable to biases

Your classroom and creating climate

- Begin building your climate with inclusive language in your syllabus
- Don't be afraid to state your expectations for your class and for dialogue (what is and is not acceptable)
- Emphasis on respect and listening

Building rapport with your students

- For discussion and dialogue, students should view all as peers (including the instructor), so power dynamics in discussion should be eliminated
- Emphasis that their thoughts and points are all valid
- Set up your class to be one where students are allowed (and forgiven) to make mistakes (this is a safe place for respectful discussion)

Reflect Alone

01

Best reflective activities address real issues or problems

02

Begin with frequent, low/no stakes reflection

03

Model how to do reflection

04

Create clear reflection prompts

05

Provide clear guidelines / rubric for graded reflection assignments

DEAL Model (Ash & Clayton, 2009)

Remembering

- What did I accomplish?
- What steps did I take to complete this work?

Understanding

- What new insights did I develop as a result of doing this work?
- How has my perspective changed after doing this assignment?

Analyzing

- What challenges to my current thinking did this work present?
- How does work in this course connect with work in another course?

Evaluating

- What did I do well? What areas do I still need to work on?
- What would I do differently if I did it again?

Creating

- What next steps do I want to take as a result of this learning experience?
 - What should I do next to achieve my goals?
-

Reflect Alone Activities: See Google Folder for pdfs

- <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/15npr4bRo3WFHgX0amdai3e8eSonLX0A?usp=sharing>

OR

- <https://tinyurl.com/y6n2kx5>



Reflect Together

List of technologies to use

- Padlet (free)
- Voicethread.com (some costs)
- Google Doc (campus google—links directly with Canvas, “collaboration tap”)
- PearDeck (free)
- Linoit app (large group reflections)
- Perusall (book / pdf group reading)



Whole Class Dialogue

A large, hand-drawn yellow smiley face is centered on an orange background. The smiley face is composed of two curved lines for eyes and a small circle for a mouth. The text is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, centered within the smiley face.

HOW DO U KNOW

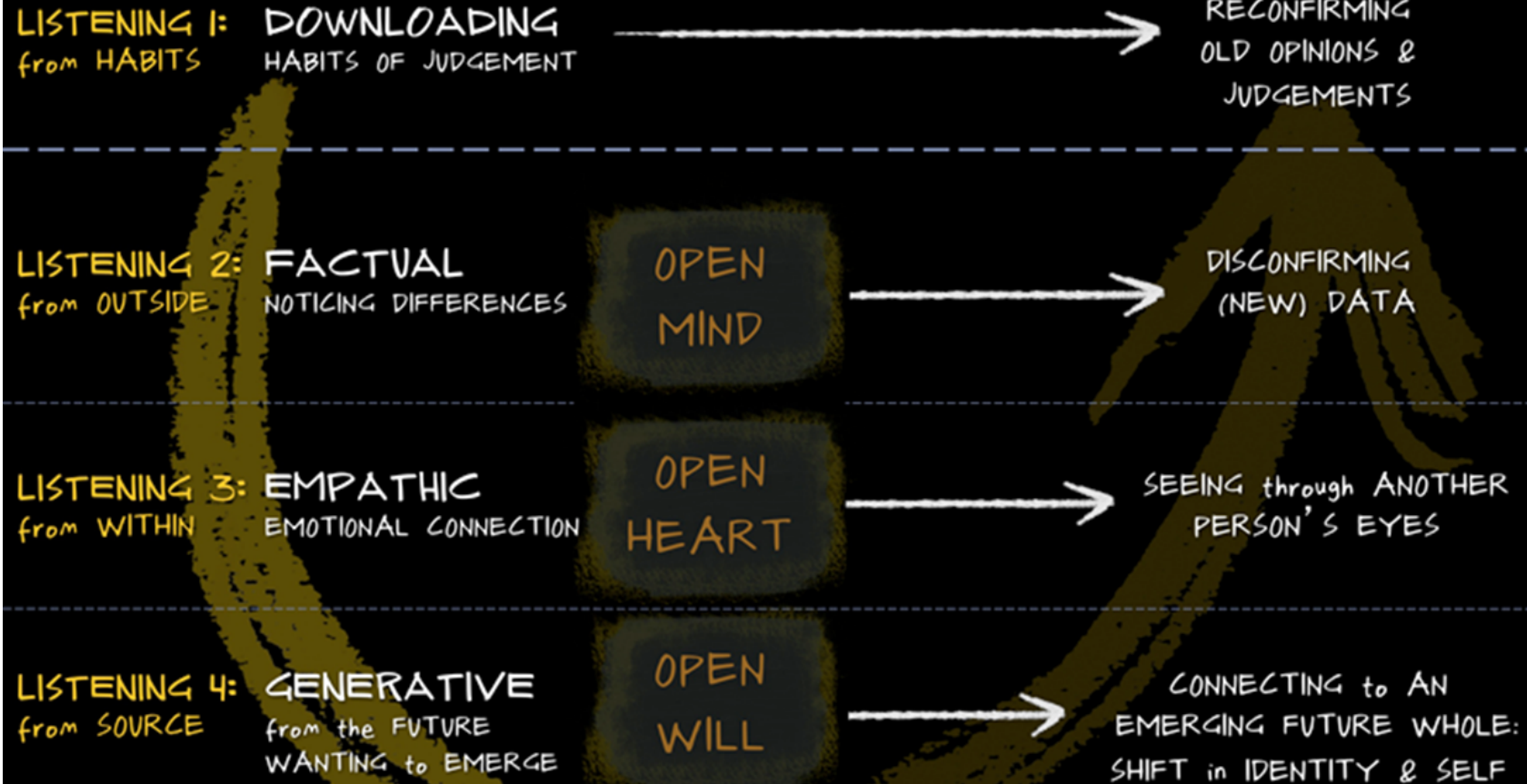
U are *true-ly*

listening?

How are we transformed by deep listening and dialog?

- A. See multiple perspectives on any challenges we face
- B. Benefit from a professional, safe, and confidential community of support
- C. Become energized by creative, life-giving dialog that moves beyond habitual thinking and debate to empathy and genuine connection.
- D. Open our hearts, minds, and wills to think together freely without agenda or judgment until a transformative idea, solution, or product emerges.

LEVELS of LISTENING

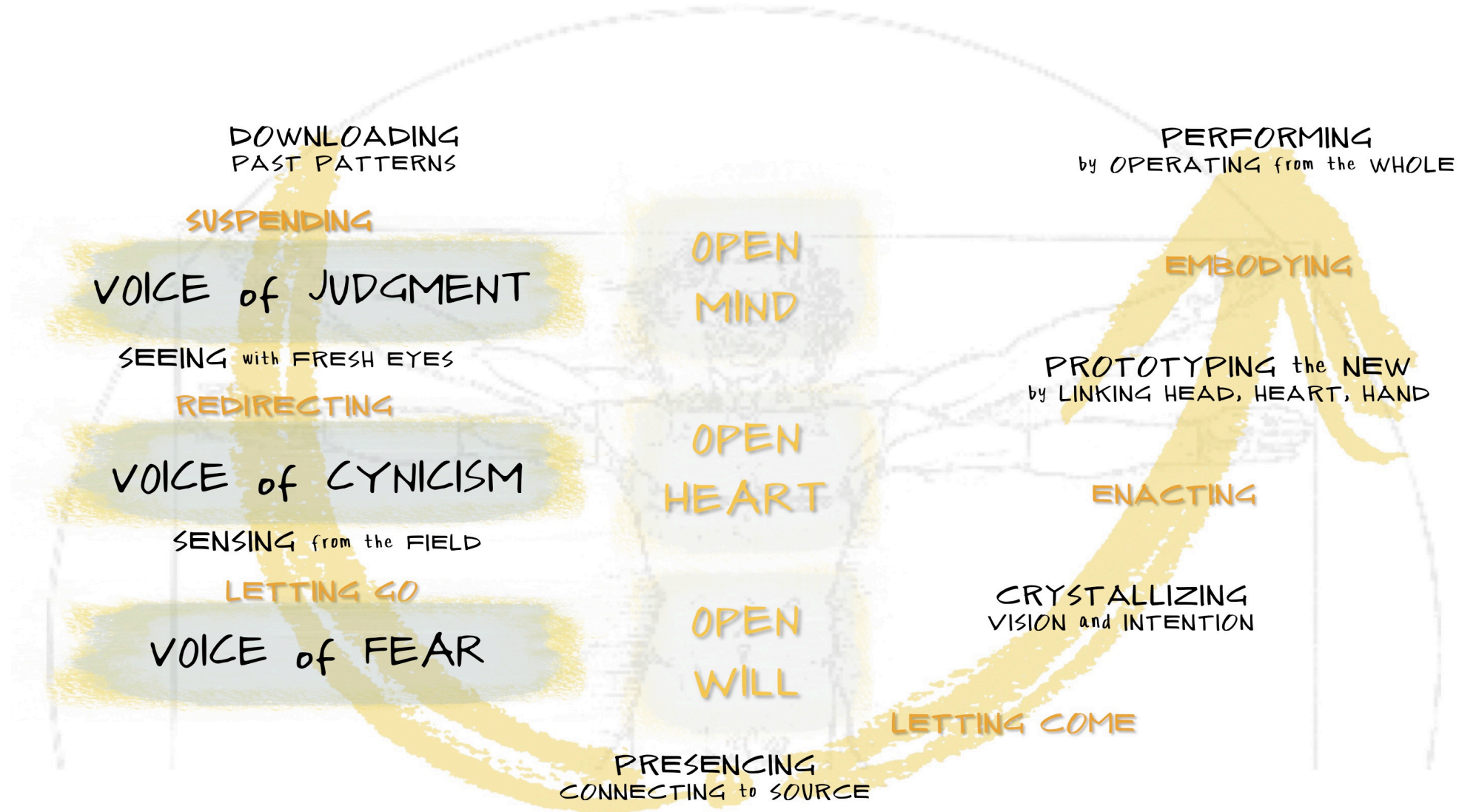




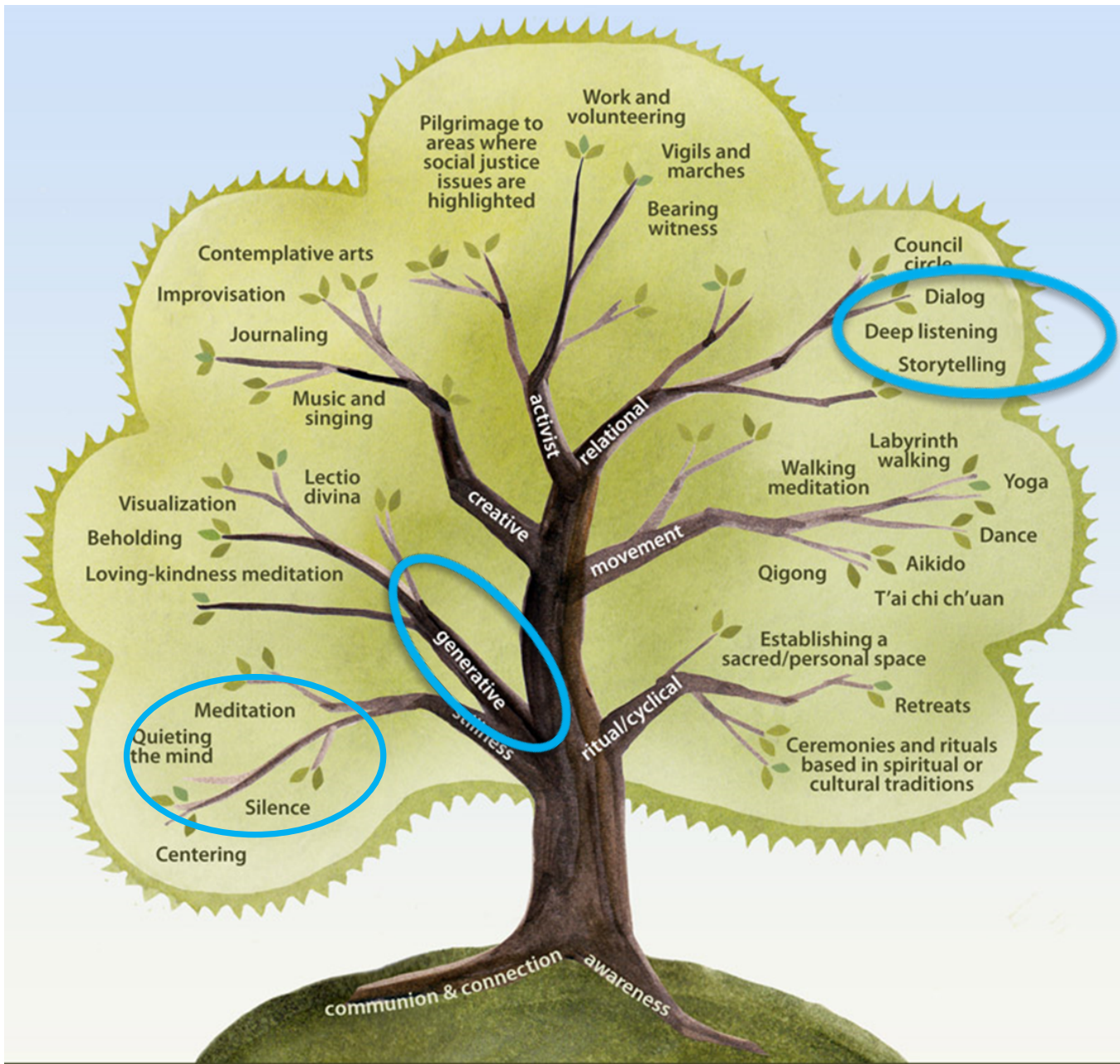




THEORY U



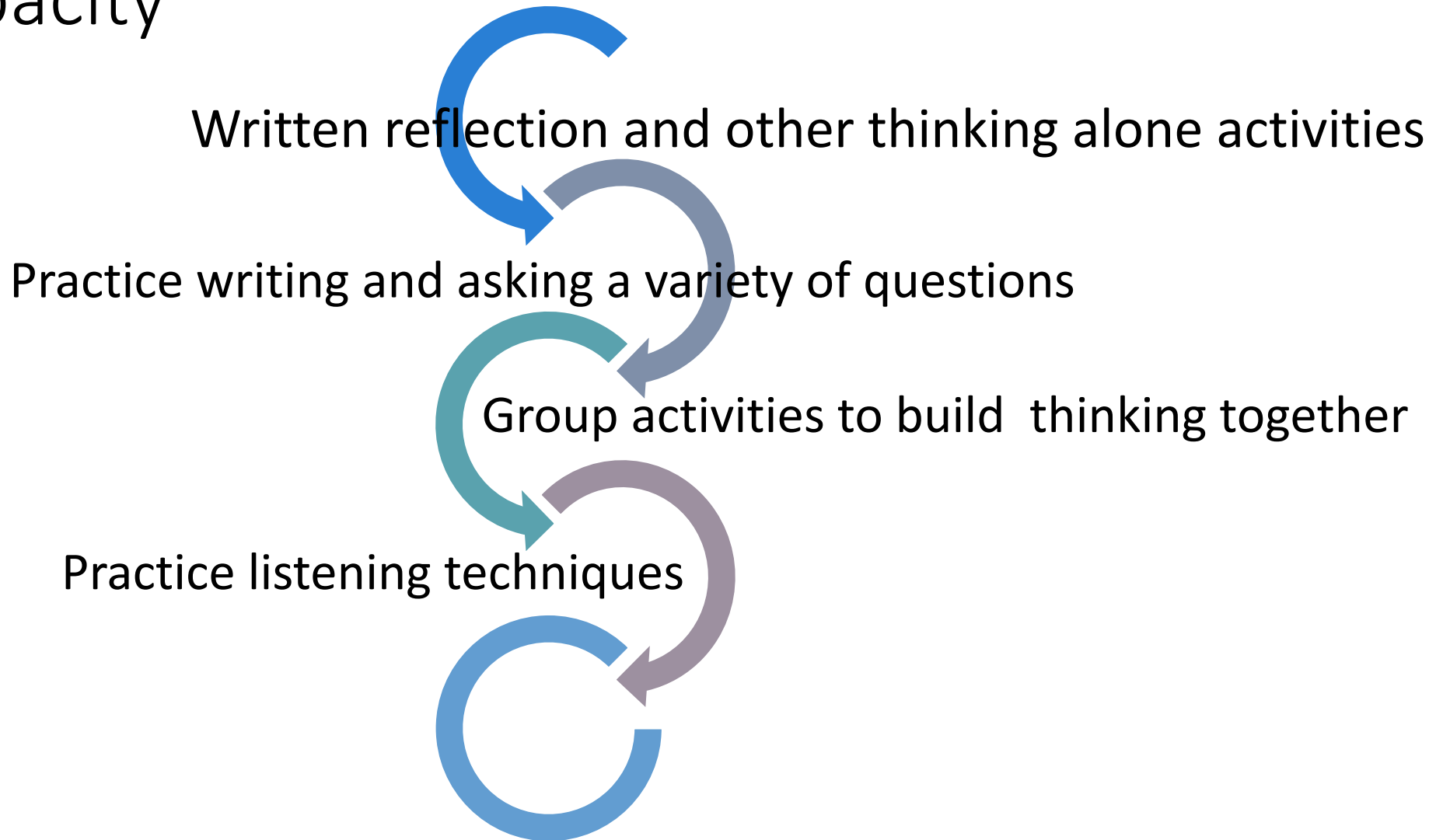
WHO IS MY SELF? WHAT IS MY WORK?



The Tree of Contemplative Practices

www.contemplativemind.org

Review: students building capacity



Develop student reflective practice and dialogue skills

Help students build deep listening skills (have them check their assumptions; have them practice remembering 5-7 people back).

Help students develop questioning skills: model use of question stems from CT models (see google folder) and have them practice writing questions.

Help students develop facilitation skills: Teach and practice facilitation using these questions “Why do you ask?” and “Can you say more?” Rather than taking turns, practice co-creating a conversation together.

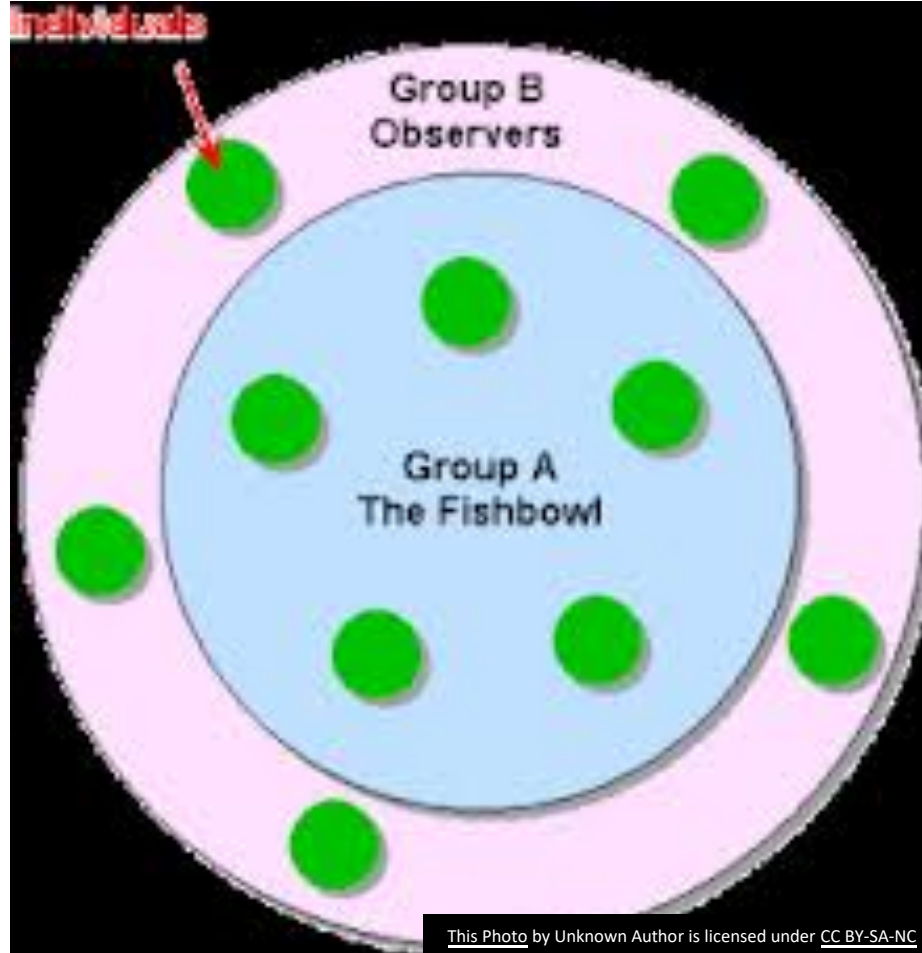
J.M. Peters (1991)

Last Activity The “Encircled Circle” or “Fishbowl” Dialogue



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- Small groups at your table discuss “What is at stake with teaching students to reflect?” Speak from personal experience and what you have heard in this session.
- 1 person from each group form inner circle, others form outer circle
- Inner circle discusses this question: “Is there something more we can do in our teaching?”
- People in the outer circle can join inner circle at will (empty chair)





Debrief

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